

EXCERPTS OF RADIO CANADA INTERNATIONAL BROADCASTS

IN SPANISH ON U.S. POLICY IN CENTRAL AMERICA

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(Commentary read by Susana Pena de Fuga)

It is difficult to believe that the recent coup d'etat that took place in Guatemala was not coordinated partially within the country, but with the support of advisers from abroad. There is no doubt that there were factors that promoted a coup, in view of the serious internal problems, like the increasingly precarious economic situation and the policies of the ousted president, who abandoned Guatemalan traditions in favor of a policy that was heavily influenced by fundamentalist Protestant sects.

Another reason, cited by General Oscar Mejia, the new Guatemalan leader, was certainly former President Efraim Rios Montt's (reluctance?) to guarantee future elections to open the path to civilian government.

Gen. Mejia has said that elections within a short time will be the primary goal of the government that has just been initiated. In addition, he has promised respect for the law, but considering that these words have come from one of the generals who is responsible for the systematic war against any voice that dissented from or opposed the regime, it is difficult to believe in that prospect.

Therefore, it is obvious that human rights and democratic relations are not really the primary goals of the Guatemalan Government. These topics seem rather to be a simplistic attempt to justify to the world the latest events that have taken place in that country, as well as to impress the U.S. Congress, because--despite Gen. Mejia's statements that he plans to solve the country's problems without foreign aid--Guatemala needs military aid to fight the revolutionary groups.

There is no doubt that the coup in Guatemala was carried out with the advice of the United States, Honduras, and El Salvador. The fact that the coup was timed to coincide with the maneuvers being carried out under Reagan's new Big Stick policy could be more than a mere coincidence.